



Glass artist Deirdre Rogers from Navan and her partner Eugene Larkin pictured with President Mary McAleese and her husband, Martin McAleese, at Áras an Uachtaráin.

Glass artist honoured at Aras

AN ARTIST from Navan was last week honoured at a unique ceremony at Áras an Uachtaráin when she was part of an elite group of master craftsmen who were personally invited to meet President of Ireland Mary McAleese.

Leading glass artist Deirdre Rogers has already been acknowledged as a pioneer in the field of contemporary craft. Respected for her skill, dedication and innovation, this latest honour will certainly be among her most treasured.

Ms Rogers was among 48 artists who are members of Portfolio, a Crafts Council of Ireland initiative recognising excellence in the crafts sector. Chosen by a panel of international experts, each Portfolio member is established at an international level as leading exponents in their field. To put it

quite simply, they are the collectibles of tomorrow.

Deirdre Rogers is renowned for the simple lines, contrasting textures and subtle colours of her glass pieces. The simplicity and quality of Scandinavian design has greatly influenced her work and she produces interior, exterior and architectural works for both corporate and private clients.

She also designs and makes awards and presentation pieces. Her work is in the collection of the National Museum of Ireland, The Crafts Council of Ireland and the Royal Dublin Society.

Ms Rogers has exhibited extensively both at home and abroad and has already been honoured by the Crafts Council of Ireland for her achievements.



There is clearly no limit today on what can be done with glass, discovers ELEANOR FLEGG

Glass is thought to be the world's oldest manufactured substance. Pure alchemy, it's made from sand heated to a high temperature and cooled to form the transparent, almost ethereal substance we call glass.

It can be then be sandblasted or acid-etched to distort and refract light. Like frozen water, it seems a little less than solid and its applications in design are endless.

In a world where light and space are precious commodities, glass can give the illusion of both. It is a material that lends itself to more than windows — glass panels that are built into the fabric of the house, or stand alone as decorative elements, are an increasingly popular element in contemporary architecture.

Glass has until recently been the symbol of both fragility and clarity, but it can be opaque as well as clear; tough as well as brittle. It can be used to make floors, even entire buildings.

Laminata House, built in the Netherlands and designed by Kruunenberg van der Erve, is the world's first genuine glass residence. Using more than 13,000 sheets laminated together for structural strength — hence the name — the building is an opaque, shimmering, sea-green box. Because the walls vary in thickness, the colours range from almost clear through varying shades of translucent green to a dark, almost black, green.

When the glass artist Deirdre Rogers won the coveted Product of the Show award at Plan Expo 2003, nobody was more astonished than Rogers herself. "I never expected to win anything. Then they kept calling me to make sure I'd be at the award ceremony. I thought that maybe I'd won the Interior Design Product category, but it never occurred to me that I'd be the overall winner. I was completely shocked."

Rogers works with clear sheet glass. "Designing with glass is all about solving problems such as structure, hanging, and dealing with condensation. But the beauty of the material is its versatility — I love the way that I can change its surface to translate my ideas. That's the thrill — not glass itself, but the process of working with it. It has such a wide range of uses."

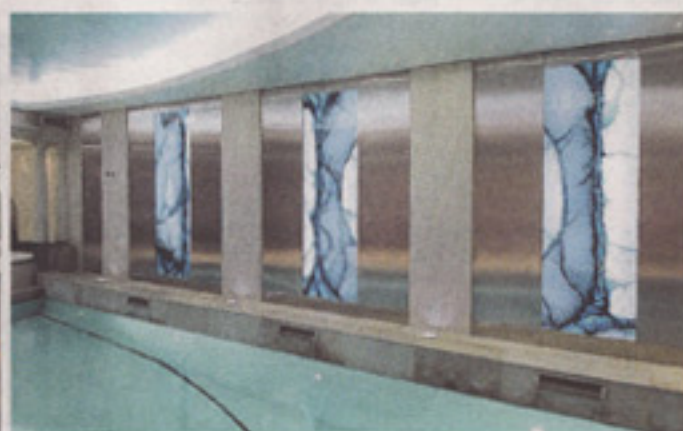
Her work varies widely. It ranges from interior screens to outdoor sculptures, from decorative vessels to wall-mounted pieces. Some of her finely etched work could have been created by Jack Frost himself — the skeletons of leaves, the tracings of foliage. Some is clear and stark, some vibrant with colour. Some pieces have a glacial quality like the cracked and impacted look of weathered ice. They are like slices of an iceberg — powerful, stained and imperfect. In a design world that constantly emphasises the strength and purity of glass, Rogers exposes and emphasises its fractal qualities.

"I also make production pieces



Rogers works with clear sheet glass; below, Yorgos vases and pillars

A way to shatter those old illusions



— candle holders and glasses — but I'm gradually phasing them out in favour of commissioned one-off pieces. The larger interior and architectural pieces are what I really enjoy doing," she says.

"I work well when I have a good personal connection with the people that I'm designing for. It's a two-way process." Prices for Rogers's commissioned work vary, but a good guideline is to estimate about €150 to €200 per sq ft.

Another artist, Killian Schurmann, is probably best known for his interior glass panels. Often milky and opaque, they incorporate deliberate flaws that run through the depth of the glass like cracks in thick ice. They show startling glimpses of colour: blues, yellows, and pinks, as unexpected as flowers in a wall.

The panels are fused — the glass is laid out in a kiln on a ceramic shelf and melted into a sheet — and devitrified, a process of very slow heating to give a white translucency.

Schurmann's work has two levels. He's probably best known for his gallery pieces, which are bought and displayed as art with a corresponding price tag (a recent 2ft x 2ft panel was on sale for €2,600). But he also designs and makes installations for specific locations.

"If someone wants to use glass as an interesting way of blocking the view from the toilet, it's not going to cost as much as a gallery piece of the same size," says Schurmann.

His work in Harlech House (www.harlechhouse.com) shows the sheer number of things that can be done with glass. "I've been working on the house for five years and I've built things into every corner," he says.

"We've inserted my glass panels into standard Velux skylights. There's a bathroom where we glued 2,000 glass crystal nuggets onto the ceiling — it looks like it's made of kryptonite. And there's a curved wall with stainless-steel mounted glass panels set into it in a geometric pattern so that it looks like an architectural scale necklace."

The greatest fear with working with glass is that it will break. The London-based designer George Papadopoulos exploits this by creating designs based upon deliberately smashed sheets of glass. His company, Yorgos, specialises in glass panels that can either be integrated into architectural spaces, or hung as free-standing artwork.

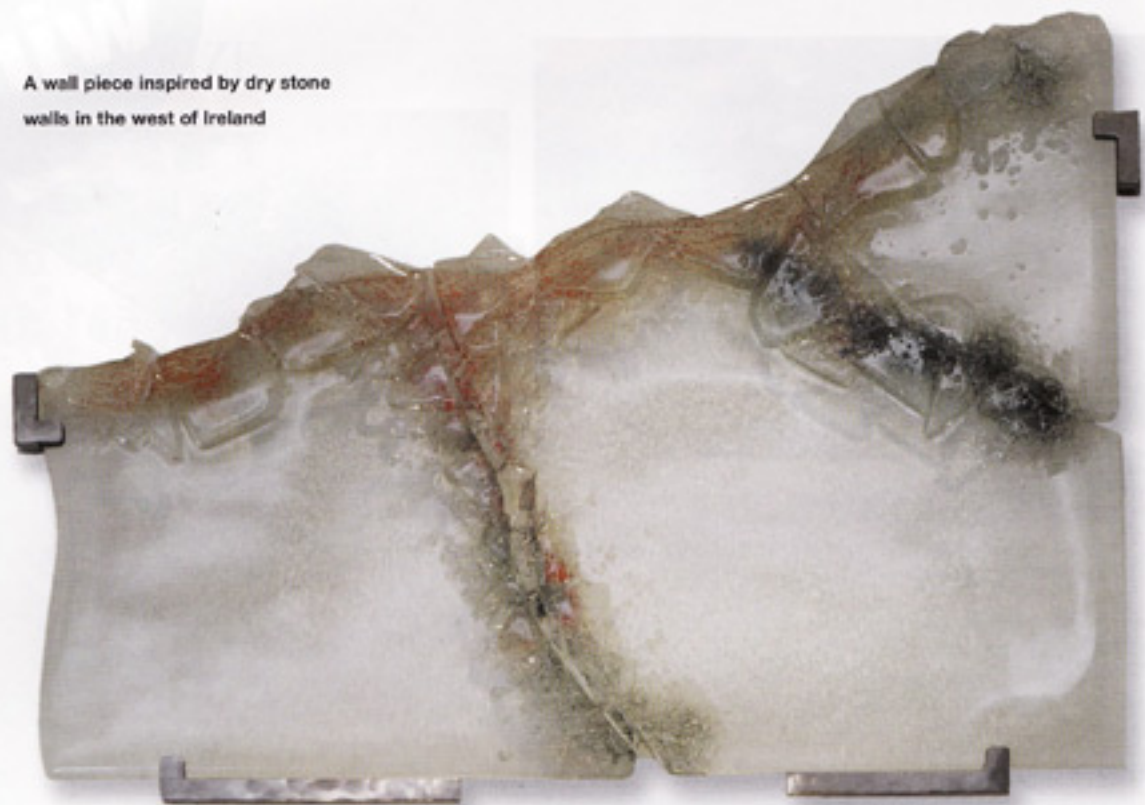
"My background is in interior design — that's how I discovered glass. It's the sexiest, most seductive material around, probably because it's transparent," he says.

Papadopoulos's work is unusual in that he uses laminated glass that is broken, coloured, textured, and relaminated. "When I'm in the studio and start breaking glass, everyone stops and stares. It's a total anathema to them. The next step is to put colours into the cracks. Because I use laminated glass it doesn't fall apart when it cracks, but it does mean that I can't use any hot processes."

Papadopoulos estimates the cost of each commission individually, but as a guide he usually indicates a 240 x 60cm panel at the British Airways lounge at Heathrow's Terminal 4, which cost £8,000 (€11,740).

■ www.deirdrerogers.com;
www.killianschurmann.com;
www.yorgosglass.com. Eleanor Flegg is the editor of Room magazine

A wall piece inspired by dry stone
walls in the west of Ireland



A Touch of Glass

By ELEANOR FLEGG

That an individual designer should win the coveted Product of the Show Award at Plan Expo 2003 is a mark of how things are changing in the construction industry. It is an acknowledgement that handcrafted one-off pieces can be successfully built into the fabric of an interior, and that there's more to art than hanging a few paintings on the wall.



GLASS ARTIST DEIRDRE ROGERS may have been an outside choice for the award, but nobody was more astonished than the artist herself: 'I never expected to win anything. Then they kept calling me to make sure that I'd be at the award ceremony. I thought that maybe I'd won the Interior Design Product category, but it never occurred to me that I'd be the overall winner. I was completely shocked!'

Rogers got into working with glass almost by default. 'I went to NCAD intending to study graphics or painting. Then I got a chance to study glass blowing for a couple of weeks...' She was seduced by the furnace and the wonder of manipulating molten glass; at the end of the study period her tutors took her aside and suggested that glass might be her thing.

Photography by Paul Sherwood

A firescreen of fused glass set
into a polished wooden base

DESIGN
room





'Blowing glass is all about timing and rhythm. You actually shape it with your hand, through wet newspaper. At college it was all blown work, and that's what I trained in, but blown glass is expensive to produce because of the cost of running a furnace – it's not feasible for a small studio.'

Rogers now works with clear sheet glass. The processes that she uses to join and shape the glass are known as fusing and slumping. 'I make a mould and place the piece of glass over it. I then program the kiln so that the glass softens and takes the shape of the mould. The colours that I use are enamel powders that melt into the glass at certain temperatures. It's all quite mathematical – a series of artistic steps. Designing with glass is all about problem solving: structure, hanging, and dealing with condensation... But the beauty of the material is its versatility – I love the way that I can change its surface to translate my ideas. That's the thrill, not glass itself, but the process of working with it. It has such a wide range of uses...' Her work varies widely; functionally it ranges from interior screens to outdoor sculptures, from decorative vessels to wall mounted pieces. Some of her finely etched work could have been done by Jack Frost – the skeletons of leaves, the tracings of foliage. Some is clear and stark, some vibrant with colour. Some pieces have a glacial quality; the cracked, broken, and impacted look of weathered ice. They are like slices of an iceberg; powerful, stained and imperfect. In a design world that constantly emphasises the strength and purity of glass, she is one of the few artists to expose its fractal qualities.

Rogers knew from the outset that she wanted to have her own studio in Ireland, but her first move after qualifying was to study for six months in Sweden. 'I'm a home bird, so it was an incredibly adventurous move for me. It was an expensive course so I had to take out a student loan and sell all my work. Then at the last minute I won a Henry Higgins travel scholarship. I think that the time in Sweden influenced my work a lot; Scandinavian design shows a careful use of nature. At the same time the colours that I use are very Irish. I'm influenced by the landscape of the Burren and County Kerry; the ever changing blues and greens.'

After several years in a shared studio in Dublin working on production pieces, Rogers gradually realised that this was neither the life nor the work that she wanted. Eventually she moved to her own studio in County Meath. 'I didn't know if I'd have the discipline to

Top: Nightlight holders made from recycled glass and etched with a variety of patterns

Bottom: 'Autume' – a sandblasted and hand engraved etching mounted on natural slate



A floor to ceiling glass wall with
abstract sandblasted pattern



National Craft Collection

Page 78

Visitors to Collect@NCG in August 2004 noted that some exhibits were accompanied by small but significant labels: "Purchased for the National Craft Collection". In turn, craftspeople whose work had been selected by curators from the National Museum of Ireland quickly noted the benefits of such formal recognition in terms of sales during the exhibition.

The creation of a National Craft Collection, beginning in late 2003, is an important development in the way Irish craft is viewed by collectors and potential collectors. One key objective of the Crafts Council of Ireland Strategic Plan 2004 - 2006 is that craft should receive the recognition it deserves. The National Craft Collection, funded jointly by the National Museum and the Crafts Council of Ireland ensures that representative examples of Ireland's finest craft will be on permanent display to the public in the What's In Store section at Collins Barracks and will be available to appear in exhibitions there.

Michael Kenny, Keeper of the Art and Industrial Division at the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks acknowledges that the museum is weakest in the contemporary area. Lack of funds and storage facilities in the 1970s, 80s and early 90s meant contemporary work was not purchased resulting in gaps in the national collection which the museum is hoping to fill over time. With the move to Collins Barracks in the mid-1990s the museum began collecting the work of the most talented graduates of the National College of Art and Design. Now, Michael Kenny welcomes the opportunity this joint initiative offers in bringing the national collection of glass, ceramics, metal, furniture and textiles up to date with work from the country's finest craftspeople.

The National Museum's origins as the Museum of Science and Art included an

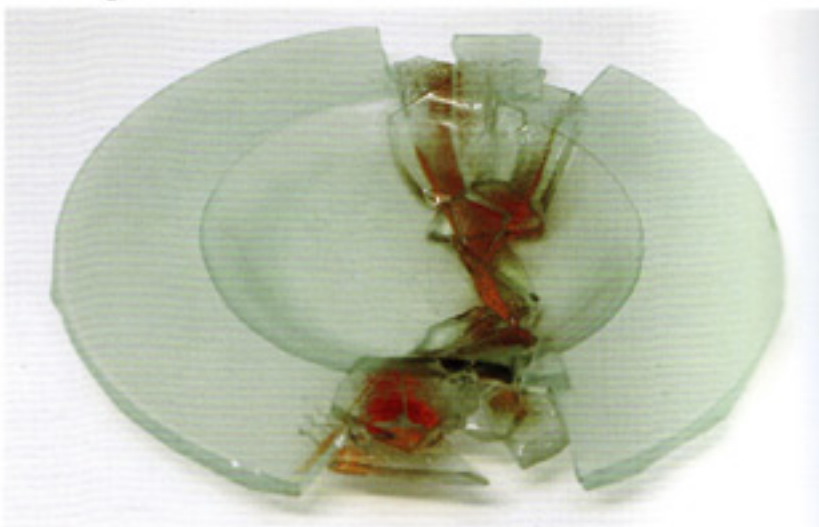
instructional element, says Kenny. "A century ago we were purchasing what were then considered fine examples of contemporary European silver, glass and ceramics to give inspiration. We want to reintroduce that aspect, to show that work of such a standard is still being produced in Ireland. We hope that visitors to the museum will be inspired by the museum's collection of contemporary craft."

"Traditionally a silverware exhibition would have focused on the 18th century, but we are now purchasing and including contemporary pieces." The museum has a brief to examine areas of craft, style and design and a remit to collect right up to the present and Michael Kenny appreciates the benefit of the CCol's "experience and wisdom" in supporting the museum's curators.

Audrey Whitty, Curator of Ceramics, Glass and Asian Materials says "the time is right" to collect contemporary work and she is looking not just to the well-established such as John French, but to younger talent like Sara Flynn. Pieces of glass, ceramics and metal purchased will be on display in What's In Store, while physically larger items such as furniture will be on display during guided tours of the museum's stores.

Each year, work will be selected by a panel made up of Michael Kenny and a specialist curator from the museum, along with Vincent O'Shea, CCol Exhibitions Programme Manager and one of a panel of CCol selectors including Dr Frances Ruane, Brian Kennedy and Joe Hogan. They will have a total fund of €20,000 per annum to purchase work for the collection.

Deirdre Rogers



PORTFOLIO

Page 82

Architects and interior designers, corporate buyers, international curators, gallery owners, high-end private buyers and the media will soon have access to a digital catalogue of works from Ireland's leading craftspeople/designer-makers.

2005 sees the launch of the CCol PORTFOLIO, presenting the work of Ireland's finest, selected by a distinguished international panel. It will feature a wide variety of styles and media, which will be linked by excellent craftsmanship and creativity.

As the leading agency in contemporary and heritage crafts, the Crafts Council of Ireland hopes to add to the economic and creative strength of the sector through PORTFOLIO. It is expected to be used when sourcing for the Percent for Art Scheme; purchasing and commissioning corporate pieces; selecting for national and international representation in exhibitions; short listing for overseas events seeking Irish representation; and researching for magazine articles. PORTFOLIO will be available on CD, in short run print version and will also be accessible through the CCol website.

The international panel making the first selections for PORTFOLIO in May 2005 is made up of:

Rick Snyderman
Snyderman-Works Gallery, Philadelphia

Maureen Bampton
Bluecoat Display Centre, Liverpool

Marta Donaghey
Contemporary Ceramics, London

Lina Falkesgaard
Galerie Tactus, Copenhagen

Mark McSwiney
Director of Architectural Services,
Department of Foreign Affairs, Dublin

Note: As PORTFOLIO is currently in the set-up stage and the catalogue is not yet in existence, the images used to illustrate the PORTFOLIO section are purely for reference and do not represent actual work available in PORTFOLIO catalogue.

The panel will be selecting craftspeople/designer-makers based on an excellent standard of craftsmanship and creative quality; a three year track record including exhibitions, commissions, and representation in major public/private collections; and relevant price structure. There will also be a new faces section for outstanding newcomers with a record of less than three years.

To keep the information in PORTFOLIO up-to-the-minute, it will be updated twice yearly, in spring and autumn. Selection will always be by an international advisory panel. There is no limit to the number to be represented on PORTFOLIO, but prior to a media launch of this service to its intended audience, CCol has set a minimum target figure of 24 craftspeople/designer-makers for inclusion, represented by a minimum total of 120 images.

Once selected, makers must submit two images twice yearly of new work (that is, work made within the 12 months before slide presentation) to the international panel to maintain their position in the catalogue.

Deirdre Rogers





Irish Design

Irish consumers today possess a visual sophistication unknown twenty years ago, due to skill, clever marketing and an international perspective on the part of designers, writes PAUL CAFFREY

Twenty years ago it is doubtful whether the average Irish reader could name two internationally known Irish designers. But now—consider Eileen Gray: the Government's acquisition of her work and its permanent display at the National Museum of Ireland has reclaimed this part of Irish material culture. Consider too John Rocha, whose reputation is as great internationally as nationally, and who has been the recipient of many awards.

Throughout the western world, public perception of design has changed. In Ireland economic prosperity and general confidence has bred an environment where critical design awareness thrives. General design consciousness has been raised by specialist design shops and by the many media articles and programmes on interior design and fashion. Exhibitions of design, design awards, professional bodies such as the Institute of Designers in Ireland and Government agencies, Crafts Council of Ireland, Enterprise Ireland have highlighted the importance of design and designers.

The design profession too has changed. The professionally trained designer, Irish educated but with European or American perspectives working in a design consultancy with international clients is a new but more common phenomenon. Advertisers and manufacturers now realise that good design not only sells products, but is itself a critical selling point.

The greatest changes affecting design have been global developments in new technologies. These profoundly influence the way designers work. Irish designers have enthusiastically adapted new technologies in graphic design/digital media and product design. Technology has been tempered to suit traditional materials and methods of production. Thus the knitwear of Lainey Keogh and others has become internationally successful. Communications revolutions, internet, email, computer aided design and lower airfares have made Ireland a more appealing location for designers. No longer must designers be located in the traditional design capitals, London, Paris, New York or Milan.

One of the most important developments in design which has occurred has been the blurring of demarcation lines between different areas of design such as fashion, interiors, and luxury goods in glass, ceramics or metals. This development has been led in part by the decline of couture (apart from the work of Jen Kelly and Richard Lewis). Designers are increasingly less likely to be engaged in the making and manufacture of their designs. In future, franchising where the production takes place, usually in the Far East, will become more commonplace.

Marketing and advertising have been quick to realise the selling potential of design which has a more contemporary style coupled with a strong brand identity. Designers who

- 1 Shane Holland
- 2 Design Partners
- 3 Sonja Landweer
- 4 Rudolf Hertz
- 5 Stephen Pearce

20th Anniversary



1984-2004

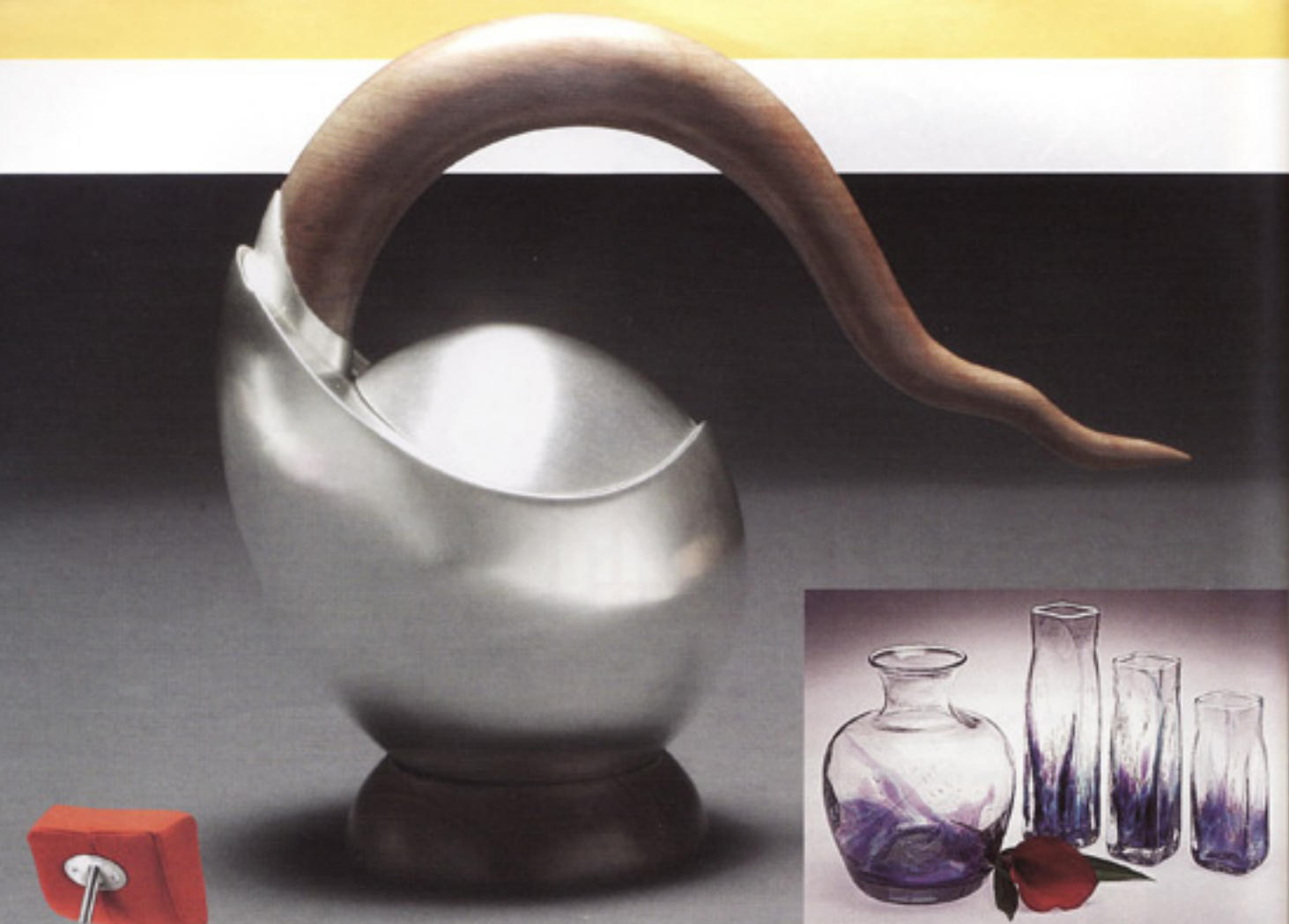
started as fashion designers have extended their range to include glassware, china, cutlery and bed linen. For example the work of John Rocha for Waterford Glass and at the Morrison Hotel, Louise Kennedy for Tipperary Crystal and Paul Costelloe cutlery for Newbridge, glassware for Newgrange crystal and tableware for Wedgwood. In an interesting contrast Belleek chose not to team up with a fashion 'name' in their recent brave new contemporary range.

Designers now create not just fashion or textiles but an entire look, an entire interior with all the component parts, furniture, textiles, glassware, choosing and arranging the works of art and objects. This lifestyle design is embodied at Avoca. Once only associated with woven textiles, Avoca now creates a range of fashion and domestic design for their six outlets in Ireland and America. This total lifestyle perspective on design may be seen in the work of the New York-based Irish designer Clodagh. For many years she has specialised in designing highly personalised interiors and luxury spa hotels throughout the world.

Irish design is dominated by the crafts. Ireland is associated internationally with the handcrafted aesthetic. Studio-based ceramics and glassmakers, well established in the 1960s and 1970s, now flourish. The quality of this work by Irish ceramicists and glass makers is outstanding. Two factors explain this. Designers and makers who have come from abroad and settled in Ireland have contributed much to the development of craft. Many such as the Dutch designer and sculptor Sonja Landweer (Fig 3) and the German silversmith Rudolf Heltzel (Fig 4) originally came to work at the Kilkenny Design Workshops in the 1960s. They influenced respectively the future development of ceramics and silversmithing in Ireland.

Education has changed. Courses in ceramics, glass, metals and textiles and degree courses in fashion, graphic and industrial design were introduced at the National College of Art and Design during





the 1970s. Latterly, design courses throughout the country in the former Regional Technical Colleges (Institutes of Technology) have produced a generation of Irish educated designers and craft practitioners.

The careers and international reputation of Sonja Landweer, Cormac Boydell, Henry Pim, Neil Reid, Deirdre McLoughlin and Katharine West best represent the flourishing of

Irish ceramics that has taken place in the past twenty years. In glass, the work of Roisín de Buitléar who draws on Irish identity for inspiration and the innovative work of Deirdre Rogers is outstanding (Fig 9).

Commercial potteries producing batch or small-scale production of hand-crafted ceramics and glass have been enormously successful. Stephen Pearce pottery (Fig 5), Nicholas Mosse's spongeware, and Jerpoint Glass, established by Keith Ledbetter (Fig 7) have all become identified with Irish design. Their

domestic wares are both functional and decorative and have become ubiquitous.

An exciting area of design emerging in the 1980s and establishing itself in the 1990s is the new style of design-led furniture making and manufacturing. This was led by talented individuals such as Knut Klimmek, Eric Pearce, Michael Bell, Arthur Duff of Duff Tisdall, Alfred Cochrane at Alfrank Design, Tadgh and Simon O'Driscoll (Fig 8), Richard Lyons of Omos, Lorraine Brennan, Noel Whelan, Charles O'Toole (Fig 10), Sharon Holland (Fig 1) furniture and lighting design, Gearóid O'Conchubhair and more recently the Irish Furniture Design Network (a group of young designers committed to creating high-quality design). Designers combine making one-off pieces with designing for small-scale batch production, using a mixture of traditional and new materials, forms and construction techniques.

The network of craft and specialist design shops throughout the country has given greater exposure to designers' work. There are now many more opportunities for designers to exhibit. There is the National Crafts Gallery in Kilkenny and the Crafts Council of Ireland's annual Showcase exhibitions. Designyard in Temple Bar provided a specialist jewellery exhibition space which

An exciting area of design emerging in the 1980s and establishing itself in the 1990s is the new style of design-led furniture making and manufacturing



opened in 1993 but was recently controversially closed down. Jewellers, silversmiths and designers working in metals have benefited most from the specialist Designyard exhibitions and displays in the National Museum. In this area Slim Borrett, Alan Ardiff, Jennifer Walsh, Brian Clarke, Eimer Conyard, Peter Donovan and Erika Marks are the leading practitioners.

The most significant event to have taken place during the 1980s was the closure of Kilkenny Design Workshops (KDW) in 1988. Established in 1963 as a state-owned design consultancy, KDW remains the most important design initiative of any Irish government. By the 1980s, KDW was well established and had shops in Kilkenny and Dublin. These promoted the work of Irish designers and manufacturers. Their exhibitions influenced public appreciation and demand for higher standards in the design of everyday mass produced objects. By the 1982 KDW had become a state-sponsored commercial company, employed 120 people and had an annual budget of £2 million. However accumulated debts, the unsuccessful opening of a shop in Bond Street and the general economic downturn in Ireland during the mid-1980s pressurized KDW. In 1988 as part of the cuts in government spending KDW was closed. KDW will be the subject of a

major exhibition *Designing Ireland: Kilkenny Design Workshops 1963-88* as part of the Cork 2005 European Capital of Culture celebrations. This will be the first exhibition to address the subject of KDW and its place in design history.

During the 1980s the employment situation for designers was quite difficult. Some found the design atmosphere stifling and wanted more of a challenge. Many designers left Ireland to study and work abroad making substantial contributions internationally. World-class Irish designers in this category include Clodagh, Orla Kieley, Peter O'Brien (Rochas), Frazer McKimm (Studio McKimm, Milan), Philip Treacy, Mariad Whisker, Anthony Dunne (Dunne & Raby), Lorna Ross, Lucy Downes, Michael McGrath, James Waldron (Armani) to list only a few.

Irish design consultancies such as Design Partners and Dolmen Associates have been at the forefront of product design. Design Partners have produced award-winning designs for a range of Logitech computer mice (Fig 2).

Designers consider the use of products by the elderly or people with disability in coming up with design solutions. The European Institute for Design and Disability was established in Dublin in 1992 through the hard work and tenacity of Paul Hogan. Based at NCAD, it addresses the need to adapt technology and design for people with disabilities. Paul Hogan was awarded the prestigious IKEA award for his achievements in design in 1995. The last twenty years has seen an explosion in the numbers of graphic design and new media design consultancies. The future development of Irish design will see a further convergence of design led by interactive technology. The establishment of Media Lab Europe, the European research partner of the MIT Media Lab, and the Digital Hub as an international digital enterprise area in Dublin will make a profound impact on the future of Irish design in an international context. ■

DR PAUL CAFFREY lectures in the history of art and design at the National College of Art and Design and is a member of the Institute of Designers in Ireland.



20th Anniversary

6 Jennifer Walsh

7 Jerpoint Glass

8 Deirdre Rogers
Photo: Philip
Lauterbach9 Tadgh + Simon
O'Driscoll

10 Charles O'Toole

IRISH 100

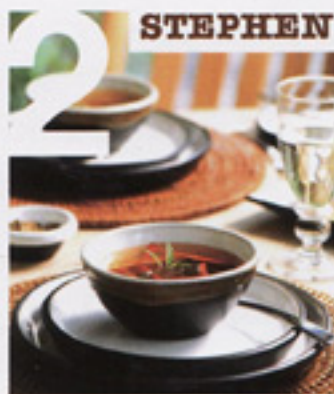
From florists to fashion designers, furniture makers to potters, architectural masterpieces, designer hotels, galleries and cool monuments – presenting *House and Home's* top 100 Irish design hot list – in no particular order.



1

E1027 COFFEE TABLE

A true classic, designed by one of the most influential designers of the 20th century, modernist and visionary, Wexford born Eileen Gray. If your budget won't stretch to the real thing pick up a pretty good look-a-like from €86 at Diamond Furniture, Longmile Road, Dublin 12. Tel: 1850 454 444.



2 STEPHEN PEARCE

A potter's potter, Stephen's been producing design classics in clay for years – simple, honest, chunky pieces in tactile terracotta and white. His Shanagarry range of tableware, which he developed with his father way back in 1962 is still going strong. *Stephen Pearce Pottery, Shanagarry, Co Cork. Tel: 021 464 6807. www.stephenpearce.com*



3 U2 LANDMARK TOWER

Ireland's leaning tower of Pisa. Burdon Durne Architects/ Craig Henry Architects winning design (selected from over 500 entries from across the globe) for the proposed U2 landmark tower on Dublin's docklands, looks a lot like a twisted glass 'Jenga' block. This slick, sexy scraper is going to house the country's most covetable apartments, shops, restaurants and an exclusive recording studio for U2.

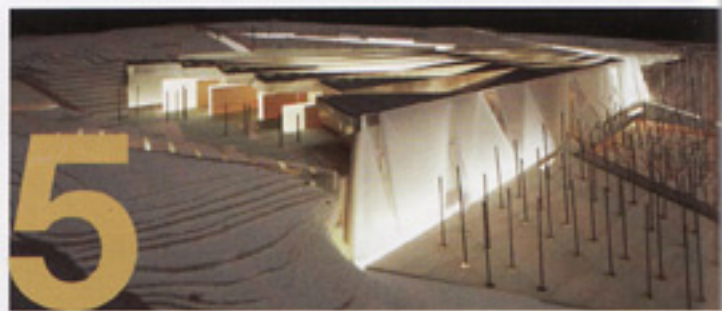
HENEGHAN PENG

The Dublin based architects who beat off 1557 competing designs from 83 countries to win an international competition to design the world's largest museum – The Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza. Their monumental design encompasses the modernity of Cairo and the antiquity of the Pyramids – a thin veil of translucent stone structured by fractal geometry, opening and closing like folds within the desert sand. *Heneghan Peng Architects, Tel: 01 475 9768.*



4 CHARLES O'TOOLE

Young hot shot, Charles has taken the design world by storm with his design driven, highly experimental, one-off creations. His latest collection of tennis ball furniture (pictured) which he recently showcased at Designers Block in the UK left visitors stunned, bemused and begging for more. It certainly gets our vote. *Charles O'Toole Furniture Design, 45 Manor Place, Stoneybatter, Dublin 7. Tel: 01 675 3840. www.charlesfurniture.ie*





59

PAT MCCARTHY

Every designer it seems is making the cross over into interiors these days, but the one that's caught our eye is renowned men's fashion designer Pat McCarthy. A man of many talents, Pat's current project is a new ceramic range, designed exclusively for Kilkenny, called 'Elements'. Due to be launched some time this spring, the collection includes vases and tableware, pared back to the simplest of designs, so as to enrich the whole experience of eating. We like! Prices range from €215 for an 18-piece table setting to vases from €34.95. (www.patmccarthystudio.ie)

62



SIXFOOTFIVE

Eyewear isn't even remotely related to interiors, but Brian McGinn of Sixfootfive (he's a tall boy) is in this list because he's Ireland's first ever eyewear designer. And because his designs are pretty darn hot - glasses inspired by 1960s mod culture, test pilots, and T-Birds, all creatively named Fly Boy, Fly Girl, Dollface and Rockabilly (available from Insight Opticians, Jervis Centre, Dublin). At the moment he's gearing for the launch of his new 2004 ready-to-wear collection due out at the end of March, and has plans to hit the UK and Europe by storm. Keep your eyes peeled. Brian McGinn, Tel: 087 907 4991.

Since we became obsessed with contemporary glass art we just can't get enough of Deirdre Rogers handcrafted vessels, inspired by the simplicity of Scandi design and natural forms in nature, and made using techniques such as sandblasting and fusing. She picked up 'best interior design product' and 'overall winner' in the product of show awards at Plan Expo 2003, and has just launched her first collection of exterior sculptures, which combine slate and limestone with glass. *Various Vessels, The Paddocks Studio, Dunmoe, Navan, Co Meath. Tel: 046 907 5616.*



61

KILKENNY

The crafts capital of Ireland and HQ of the Crafts Council and National Craft Gallery. Kilkenny's reputation as a home for top class designers is second to none; furniture designer Clive Nunn, potter Stoneware Jackson and textile designer Sheena McKeon are just some of the designers based here. Kilkenny's arts festival (which runs for ten days every August) has become one of the key events in the Irish design calendar and features performances from some of the world's leading artists. A highlight of last year's show was HA Schult's 'Bin Soldiers' - a 1000-strong army of life-size soldiers made entirely of computer parts, scrap metal, tins, bottles and other found materials. Don't miss this year's festival from 6th until 15th August. www.kilkennyarts.ie

National Crafts Gallery, Kilkenny

63

THE CONROY COLLECTIVE

The most beautiful rugs created by the flooring designer of the moment, Stephanie Conroy. She's made flooring into a style statement with her bespoke, hand tufted designs in luxuriously soft wool. Floor bored? You needn't be again. *The Conroy Collective, Unit 17, the Mill, Celbridge, Co Kildare. Tel: 01 627 5307. www.conroycollective.com*

ROBERT TULLY

A senior lecturer at the Dublin Institute of Technology and furniture designer, Robert has challenged the perception of flat pack furniture as low value with his highly experimental pieces and brought affordable, design-led furniture to the masses. We love him for it. *Robert Tully, Tel: 085 824 8703.*

64



Showstoppers recognised

The biggest event in the construction industry calendar took place in the RDS at the beginning of November. PLAN reports on the winners of the Product of the Show and Opus Awards 2003 at Plan Expo.



Minister Noel Ahern presenting Deirdre Rogers with the Overall Product Award, and Willie Crowe, chairman of the judging panel

Product of the Show Awards

The industry once again converged on the RDS for Plan Expo. Exhibitors and visitors

from every segment of the construction sector were in evidence and as usual, the competition for the Product of the Show Awards was intense.

In the **Best Exterior Building**

Product category the winner was the Graepel Portable Pedestrian Bridge from Graepel Perforators & Weavers. The company is an Irish manufacturer of perforated metals, woven wire mesh, industrial flooring and click profile edging and also stocks welded, expanded and filter mesh. The folding pedestrian bridge is a new addition to its portfolio.

Highly commended were the FBT Poroton Block from Formula Building Technology; the HIT Balcony Extension System from Construction Accessories; and Styro Stone from Styro Stone UK.

In the **Best Interior Building Product** category the winner was Tri-iso Super 9 from U-Value Insulation. Highly commended was the Eurozone Metal Stud System from Eurozone Thermo Forms. Commended were the Proclima Airtight System from MacCann & Byrne; the



Ben Pollock, member of the judging panel with Minister Noel Ahern and Fred Graepel of Graepel Perforators & Weavers